Privacy Leaflet for Patients

How we protect your health information

NSW GOVERNMENT

NSW Health

Collection of your health information

To provide you with appropriate treatment, we may collect a range of health information about you. This may include information about your health, your pathology and diagnostic test results, x-ray and other imaging, and information about your medication.

We collect health information directly from you wherever possible. If this is not possible, or in an emergency, we may refer to your previous health records, other health care providers and your My Health Record.

We may also need to collect information from a family member, friend, carer or other person such as an interpreter who can help us to provide you with appropriate health care.

Use or disclosure of your health information

Your health information may be used by the NSW public health service, or disclosed outside the health service, to enable appropriate care and treatment to be provided to you.

For example, your information may be used or disclosed as follows:

- to other health services, hospitals or medical specialists involved in your health care.
- to your nominated GP, including information provided with your discharge referral documents.
- to the Ambulance Service of NSW.
- to My Health Record.
- to contact you at home regarding follow-up appointments.
- to your carer to assist with your care.
- to contact you for feedback on the services you have received.
- to pastoral care workers, including hospital chaplains, providing spiritual and pastoral care.
- to students and other staff for training purposes.
- to other health services and authorised third parties to help prevent a serious and imminent threat to someone's life, health or welfare, such as in an emergency.
- for purposes relating to organ or tissue donation. This may include next of kin contact details.
- for operational and management activities, including funding, planning, safety and quality improvement.
- to investigate a complaint or incident.
- to manage a legal action or claim brought by the patient against the health service.

If you do not wish for us to collect, use or disclose certain information about you, you will need to tell us and we will discuss with you any consequences this may have for your health care.

The law also allows or requires your health information to be disclosed to other third parties, for example:

- to State and Commonwealth government agencies for statutory reporting purposes, such as to report infectious diseases, cancer and other notifiable diseases, to report births and deaths, and to provide Medicare details.
- to researchers for public interest research projects as approved by a Human Research Ethics Committee.
- to other health services or law enforcement agencies, such as the police, if you provide us with information relating to a serious crime, including serious assault, domestic violence or child abuse.
- to other agencies where the information relates to the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child or young person.
- to comply with a subpoena or search warrant if your health information is required as evidence in court.

National Disability Insurance Scheme

If you, or someone on your behalf, provide us with a copy of your NDIS Plan or other NDIS documents, we may use or disclose this information for purposes related to your health care and social services. This may include sharing information with other government agencies, private sector or non-government organisations to help health and non-health services meet your needs.

Access to your information

You are entitled to request access to your health information held by us. Normally you will be asked to apply for access in writing and provide identification. You may be charged a fee if you request copies of your health record. We respond to requests for access to information as soon as possible, and in most cases no later than 28 days.

Access to your information may be declined in special circumstances, such as where giving access would put you or another person at risk of mental or physical harm.

If you believe the information we hold about you is incorrect or an error has been made, please let us know and we will correct it or add a notation to your health record.

Requests for access to your health record should be addressed either to the Medical Records Department or to the manager of the health service facility you attended.

Security of your health information

We follow strict government standards regarding the secure storage of your health information in all formats. We regularly enhance and audit our systems in order to protect your information from unauthorised access, loss or other misuse.

NSW public health services hold health information in paper records, on local electronic medical record systems and the NSW HealtheNet.

HealtheNet is a secure state-wide electronic record used by the NSW public health service. HealtheNet contains a summary of your health information, for example, your discharge summaries, pathology and diagnostic test results and medication information.

If you attend a public health service anywhere in NSW, in most cases this summary information will be available to your treating clinical staff via HealtheNet.

My Health Record

My Health Record is Australia's national digital health record system. All Australians have a My Health Record, unless you choose not to have one.

If you have attended a NSW public health service, a summary of your health information will be sent to your My Health Record. NSW public health staff may also view, and send information to, your My Health Record.

If you have a My Health Record, but do not wish for your information from a particular doctor's appointment or hospital visit to be included in your My Health Record, you must inform the health provider at the beginning of your visit.

For further information about My Health Record, telephone 1800 723 471, or go to: www.myhealthrecord.gov.au

NSW GOVERNMENT

NSW Health

Contact us

If you have questions or a complaint about the privacy of your health information, please contact:

The District Privacy Contact Officer

Name: The District Privacy Contact Officer

Postal address: Northern Sydney Local Health District
PO Box 4007 RNS LPO
St Leonards NSW 2065

Telephone: (02) 9462 9947

Email: NSLHD-PrivacyandGIPA@health.nsw.gov.au

Translating and Interpreting service

If you require assistance with contacting the above services or require translation, please call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 13 14 50.

For a privacy information leaflet in other languages, visit the Multicultural Health Communication Service at:

www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au

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